

An investigation of prevention strategies applied to minimize student deviant behaviour in secondary schools within Bungoma County, Kenya

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Abstract

Whereas many schools have been known to exhibit strong school culture practices that drive academic excellence, rampant theft and exam cheating in schools across counties in Kenya have stood out as a unique trend of deviance that could be reflecting absence of a well executed deviance prevention curriculum. Knowledge of the emerging trends in kinds of deviance being indulged in presupposes an effective rollout of preventive strategies within school cultures yet this has been missing. The purpose of this study was to address this gap by investigating prevention strategies being applied to minimize student deviant behaviour in schools within Bungoma County. A sample size of 400 was used from a study population size [N] of 155,796 composed of students, teachers and school management staff in secondary schools of Bungoma County. The mixed research design that comprised of concurrent triangulation, correlation and cross sectional survey was employed. Multiphase and stratified sampling was used to select schools, students and teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select school management staff. The data for the study was obtained through questionnaires and interviews. Descriptive statistics: cross-tabulations and frequency tables together with inferential statistical analyses: Chi square and simple linear regression analyses were used to analyze the data. The study established that all the nine listed preventive strategies established to minimize student deviant behaviour in schools within Bungoma County were being applied. Chi-square tests revealed a significant relationship between preventive strategies and student deviance prevalence in Bungoma County schools. The study concludes that while most of the preventive strategies are highly applied within school cultures in Bungoma county, effective prevention curriculum as a core component of preventive strategies is poorly applied. The study recommends establishment and enforcement of a deviance prevention curriculum anchored on school-wide positive behaviour support systems.

Key Words: *Prevention Strategies, School Culture, Student Deviance, Secondary, Bungoma County*